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THE VIRGIN
MARTYR

THE

Virgin Martyr.

BY

PHILIP MASSINGER.

WITH SIX DESIGNS, BY F. R. PICKERSGILL, ESQ.

LONDON:
JAMES BURNS, 17, PORTMAN STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE.
M DCCC XLIV.

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THE plot of this Tragedy is founded on the tenth and last general persecution of the Christians, which broke out in the nineteenth year of Dioclesian's reign, (about A.D. 303,) with a fury hard to be expressed; the Christians being everywhere, without distinction of age, sex, or condition, dragged to execution, and subjected to the most exquisite torments that rage, cruelty, and hatred could suggest.

Dramatis Personæ.

DIOCLESIAN, MAXIMINUS, } *Emperors of Rome.*
KING OF PONTUS.
KING OF EPIRE.
KING OF MACEDON.
SAPRITIUS, *Governor of Cæsarea.*
THEOPHILUS, *a zealous persecutor of the Christians.*
SEMPRONIUS, *captain of* SAPRITIUS' *guards.*
ANTONINUS, *son to* SAPRITIUS.
MACRINUS, *friend to* ANTONINUS.
HARPAX, *an evil spirit, following* THEOPHILUS *in the shape of a secretary.*
ANGELO, *a good spirit, serving* DOROTHEA *in the habit of a page.*
JULIANUS, GETA, } *servants of* THEOPHILUS.
PRIEST OF JUPITER.
BRITISH SLAVE.

ARTEMIA, *daughter to* DIOCLESIAN.
CALISTA, CHRISTETA, } *daughters to* THEOPHILUS.
DOROTHEA, *the Virgin-Martyr.*

Officers and Executioners.

SCENE, Cæsarea.

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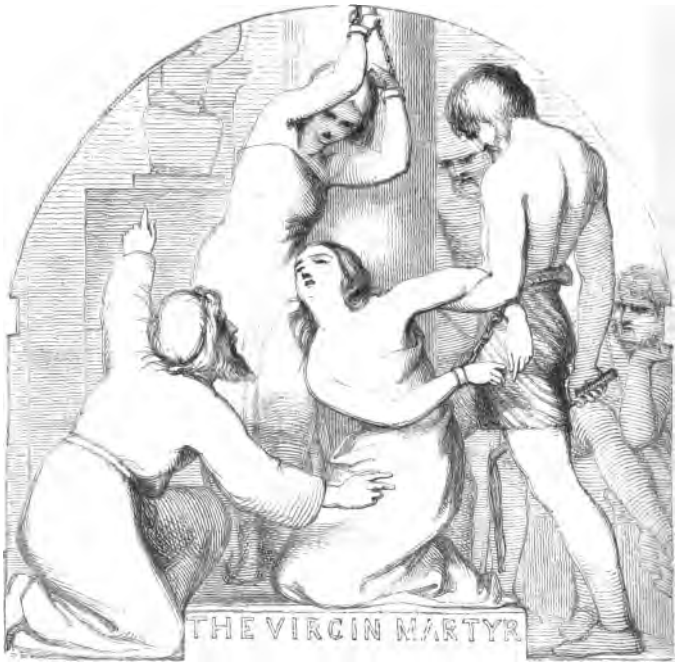

Yet still I was a father,
For e'en then, when the flinty hangman's whips
Were worn with stripes spent on their tender limbs,
I kneel'd, and wept, and begg'd them, though they would
Be cruel to themselves, they would take pity
On my gray hairs.

The Virgin-Martyr.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Governor's Palace.

Enter THEOPHILUS *and* HARPAX.

Theoph. COME to Cæsarea to-night!
Harp. Most true, sir.
Theoph. The emperor in person!
Harp. Do I live?
Theoph. 'Tis wondrous strange! The marches of great princes,
Like to the motions of prodigious meteors,
Are step by step observed; and loud-tongued Fame
The harbinger to prepare their entertainment:

And, were it possible so great an army,
Though cover'd with the night, could be so near,
The governor cannot be so unfriended
Among the many that attend his person,
But, by some secret means, he should have notice
Of Cæsar's purpose;—in this, then, excuse me
If I appear incredulous.

Harp. At your pleasure.

Theoph. Yet, when I call to mind you never fail'd me
In things more difficult, but have discover'd
Deeds that were done thousand leagues distant from me,
When neither woods, nor caves, nor secret vaults,
No, nor the Power they serve, could keep these Christians
Or from my reach or punishment, but thy magic
Still laid them open; I begin again
To be as confident as heretofore;
It is not possible thy powerful art
Should meet a check, or fail.

Enter the Priest of Jupiter, bearing an Image, and followed by CALISTA *and* CHRISTETA.

Harp. Look on the Vestals,
The holy pledges that the gods have given you,

Your chaste, fair daughters. Were't not to upbraid
A service to a master not unthankful,
I could say these, in spite of your prevention,
Seduced by an imagined faith, not reason,
(Which is the strength of nature) quite forsaking
The Gentile gods, had yielded up themselves
To this new-found religion. This I cross'd,
Discover'd their intents, taught you to use,
With gentle words and mild persuasions,
The power and the authority of a father,
Set off with cruel threats; and so reclaim'd them:
And, whereas they with torment should have died,
(Hell's furies to me, had they undergone it!) [*Aside.*
They are now votaries in great Jupiter's temple,
And, by his priest instructed, grown familiar
With all the mysteries, nay, the most abstruse ones,
Belonging to his deity.

Theoph. 'Twas a benefit,
For which I ever owe you.—Hail, Jove's flamen!
Have these my daughters reconciled themselves,
Abandoning for ever the Christian way,
To your opinion?

Priest. And are constant in it.
They teach their teachers with their depth of judgment,

And are with arguments able to convert
The enemies to our gods, and answer all
They can object against us.

Theoph. My dear daughters!

Cal. We dare dispute against this new-sprung sect,
In private or in public.

Harp. My best lady,
Perséver in it.

Chris. And what we maintain,
We will seal with our bloods.

Harp. Brave resolution!
I e'en grow fat to see my labours prosper.

Theoph. I young again. To your devotions.

Harp. Do—
My prayers be present with you.

[*Exeunt Priest*, CAL. *and* CHRIS.

Theoph. O my Harpax!
Thou engine of my wishes, thou that steel'st
My bloody resolutions, thou that arm'st
My eyes 'gainst womanish tears and soft compassion,
Instructing me, without a sigh, to look on
Babes torn by violence from their mother's breasts
To feed the fire, and with them make one flame;
Old men, as beasts, in beasts' skins torn by dogs;

Virgins and matrons tire the executioners;
Yet I, unsatisfied, think their torments easy—

Harp. And in that, just, not cruel.

Theoph. Were all sceptres
That grace the hands of kings made into one,
And offer'd me, all crowns laid at my feet,
I would contemn them all,—thus spit at them;
So I to all posterities might be call'd
The strongest champion of the Pagan gods,
And rooter out of Christians.

Harp. Oh, mine own,
Mine own dear lord! to further this great work,
I ever live thy slave.

Enter SAPRITIUS *and* SEMPRONIUS.

Theoph. No more—The governor.

Sap. Keep the ports close, and let the guards be doubled;
Disarm the Christians; call it death in any
To wear a sword, or in his house to have one.

Semp. I shall be careful, sir.

Sap. 'Twill well become you.
Such as refuse to offer sacrifice
To any of our gods, put to the torture.
Grub up this growing mischief by the roots;

And know, when we are merciful to them,
We to ourselves are cruel.

Semp. You pour oil
On fire that burns already at the height:
I know the emperor's edict, and my charge,
And they shall find no favour.

Theoph. My good lord,
This care is timely for the entertainment
Of our great master, who this night in person
Comes here to thank you.

Sap. Who! the emperor?

Harp. To clear your doubts, he doth return in triumph,
Kings lackeying by his triumphant chariot;
And in this glorious victory, my lord,
You have an ample share: for know, your son,
The ne'er-enough commended Antoninus,
So well hath flesh'd his maiden sword, and dyed
His snowy plumes so deep in enemies' blood,
That, besides public grace beyond his hopes,
There are rewards propounded.

Sap. I would know
No mean in thine, could this be true.

Harp. My head
Answer the forfeit.

Sap. Of his victory
There was some rumour: but it was assured,
The army pass'd a full day's journey higher
Into the country.

Harp. It was so determined;
But, for the further honour of your son,
And to observe the government of the city,
And with what rigour, or remiss indulgence,
The Christians are pursued, he makes his stay here:
[*Trumpets.*
For proof, his trumpets speak his near arrival.

Sap. Haste, good Sempronius, draw up our guards,
And with all ceremonious pomp receive
The conquering army. Let our garrison speak
Their welcome in loud shouts, the city show
Her state and wealth.

Semp. I'm gone. [*Exit.*

Sap. O, I am ravish'd
With this great honour! cherish, good Theophilus,
This knowing scholar. Send for your fair daughters;
I will present them to the emperor,
And in their sweet conversion, as a mirror,
Express your zeal and duty.

Theoph. Fetch them, good Harpax.
[*Exit* HARPAX.

Enter SEMPRONIUS, *at the head of the guard, soldiers leading three kings bound;* ANTONINUS *and* MACRINUS *bearing the emperor's eagles;* DIOCLESIAN *with a gilt laurel on his head, leading in* ARTEMIA: SAPRITIUS *kisses the emperor's hand, then embraces his son;* HARPAX *brings in* CALISTA *and* CHRISTETA. *Loud shouts.*

Diocle. So: at all parts I find Cæsarea
Completely govern'd; the licentious soldier
Confined in modest limits, and the people
Taught to obey, and not compell'd with rigour;
The ancient Roman discipline revived,
Which raised Rome to her greatness, and proclaim'd her
The glorious mistress of the conquer'd world;
But, above all, the service of the gods,
So zealously observed, that, good Sapritius,
In words to thank you for your care and duty,
Were much unworthy Dioclesian's honour,
Or his magnificence to his loyal servants.—
But I shall find a time with noble titles
To recompense your merits.

Sap. Mightiest Cæsar,
Whose power upon this globe of earth is equal
To Jove's in heaven; whose victorious triumphs

On proud rebellious kings that stir against it,
Are perfect figures of his immortal trophies
Won in the Giants' war; whose conquering sword,
Guided by his strong arm, as deadly kills
As did his thunder! all that I have done,
Or, if my strength were centupled, could do,
Comes short of what my loyalty must challenge.
But, if in anything I have deserved
Great Cæsar's smile, 'tis in my humble care
Still to preserve the honour of those gods,
That make him what he is: my zeal to them
I ever have express'd in my fell hate
Against the Christian sect that, with one blow,
(Ascribing all things to an unknown Power,)
Would strike down all their temples, and allows them
Nor sacrifice nor altars.

Diocle. Thou, in this,
Walk'st hand in hand with me; my will and power
Shall not alone confirm, but honour all
That are in this most forward.

Sap. Sacred Cæsar,
If your imperial majesty stand pleased
To shower your favours upon such as are
The boldest champions of our religion,

Look on this reverend man, [*points to Theophilus.*]
whom the power
Of searching out, and punishing such delinquents,
Was by your choice committed; and, for proof,
He hath deserved the grace imposed upon him,
And with a fair and even hand proceeded,
Partial to none, not to himself, or those
Of equal nearness to himself; behold
This pair of virgins.

Diocle. What are these?

Sap. His daughters.

Artem. Now by your sacred fortune, they are fa
ones,
Exceeding fair ones: would 'twere in my power
To make them mine!

Theoph. They are the gods', great lady,
They were most happy in your service else:
On these, when they fell from their father'
faith,
I used a judge's power, entreaties failing
(They being seduced) to win them to adore
The holy powers we worship; I put on
The scarlet robe of bold authority,
And, as they had been strangers to my blood,
Presented them in the most horrid form,

All kind of tortures; part of which they suffer'd
With Roman constancy.

Artem. And could you endure,
Being a father, to behold their limbs
Extended on the rack?

Theoph. I did; but must
Confess there was a strange contention in me,
Between the impartial office of a judge,
And pity of a father; to help justice
Religion stept in, under which odds
Compassion fell:—yet still I was a father.
For e'en then, when the flinty hangman's whips
Were worn with stripes spent on their tender limbs,
I kneel'd, and wept, and begg'd them, though they would
Be cruel to themselves, they would take pity
On my gray hairs; now note a sudden change,
Which I with joy remember; those, whom torture,
Nor fear of death, could terrify, were o'ercome
By seeing of my sufferings; and so won,
Returning to the faith that they were born in,
I gave them to the gods. And be assured
I that used justice with a rigorous hand,
Upon such beauteous virgins, and mine own,
Will use no favour, where the cause commands me,

To any other; but, as rocks, be deaf
To all entreaties.

Diocle. Thou deserv'st thy place;
Still hold it, and with honour. Things thus order'd
Touching the gods, 'tis lawful to descend
To human cares, and exercise that power
Heaven has conferr'd upon me;—which that you,
Rebels and traitors to the power of Rome,
Should not with all extremities undergo,
What can you urge to qualify your crimes,
Or mitigate my anger?

K. of Epire. We are now
Slaves to thy power, that yesterday were kings,
And had command o'er others; we confess
Our grandsires paid yours tribute, yet left us,
As their forefathers had, desire of freedom.
And, if you Romans hold it glorious honour,
Not only to defend what is your own,
But to enlarge your empire, (though our fortune
Denies that happiness,) who can accuse
The famish'd mouth, if it attempt to feed?
Or such, whose fetters eat into their freedoms,
If they desire to shake them off?

K. of Pontus. We stand
The last examples, to prove how uncertain

All human happiness is; and are prepared
To endure the worst.

K. of Macedon. That spoke, which now is highest
In Fortune's wheel, must, when she turns it next,
Decline as low as we are. This consider'd
Taught the Ægyptian Hercules, Sesostris,
That had his chariot drawn by captive kings,
To free them from that slavery;—but to hope
Such mercy from a Roman were mere madness:
We are familiar with what cruelty
Rome, since her infant greatness, ever used
Such as she triumph'd over; age nor sex
Exempted from her tyranny; sceptre'd princes
Kept in her common dungeons, and their children,
In scorn train'd up in base mechanic arts,
For public bondmen. In the catalogue
Of those unfortunate men, we expect to have
Our names remember'd.

Diocle. In all growing empires,
Even cruelty is useful; some must suffer,
And be set up examples to strike terror
In others, though far off: but, when a state
Is raised to her perfection, and her bases
Too firm to shrink, or yield, we may use mercy,
And do't with safety; but to whom? not cowards,

Or such whose baseness shames the conqueror,
And robs him of his victory, as weak Perseus
Did great Æmilius. Know, therefore, kings
Of Epire, Pontus, and of Macedon,
That I with courtesy can use my prisoners,
As well as make them mine by force, provided
That they are noble enemies: such I found you,
Before I made you mine; and, since you were so,
You have not lost the courages of princes,
Although the fortune. Had you borne yourselves
Dejectedly, and base, no slavery
Had been too easy for you: but such is
The power of noble valour, that we love it
Even in our enemies, and taken with it,
Desire to make them friends, as I will you.

K. of Epire. Mock us not, Cæsar.

Diocle. By the gods, I do not.
Unloose their bonds:—I now as friends embrace you.
Give them their crowns again.

K. of Pontus. We are twice o'ercome;
By courage, and by courtesy.

K. of Macedon. But this latter
Shall teach us to live ever faithful vassals
To Dioclesian, and the power of Rome.

K. of Epire. All kingdoms fall before her!

K. of Pontus. And all kings
Contend to honour Cæsar!
Diocle. I believe
Your tongues are the true trumpets of your hearts,
And in it I most happy. Queen of fate,
Imperious Fortune! mix some light disaster
With my so many joys, to season them,
And give them sweeter relish: I'm girt round
With true felicity; faithful subjects here,
Here bold commanders, here with new-made friends:
But, what's the crown of all, in thee, Artemia,
My only child, whose love to me and duty,
Strive to exceed each other!
Artem. I make payment
But of a debt, which I stand bound to tender
As a daughter and a subject.
Diocle. Which requires yet
A retribution from me, Artemia,
Tied by a father's care, how to bestow
A jewel, of all things to me most precious:
Nor will I therefore longer keep thee from
The chief joys of creation, marriage rites;
Which, that thou may'st with greater pleasures taste of,
Thou shalt not like with mine eyes, but thine own.

Among these kings, forgetting they were captives;
Or those, remembering not they are my subjects,
Make choice of any: By Jove's dreadful thunder,
My will shall rank with thine.

Artem. It is a bounty
The daughters of great princes seldom meet with;
For they, to make up breaches in the state,
Or for some other public ends, are forced
To match where they affect not. May my life
Deserve this favour!

Diocle. Speak; I long to know
The man thou wilt make happy.

Artem. If that titles,
Or the adored name of Queen could take me,
Here would I fix mine eyes, and look no further;
But these are baits to take a mean-born lady,
Not her that boldly may call Cæsar father:
In that I can bring honour unto any,
But from no king that lives receive addition:
To raise desert and virtue by my fortune,
Though in a low estate, were greater glory,
Than to mix greatness with a prince that owns
No worth but that name only.

Diocle. I commend thee;
Tis like myself.

Artem. If, then, of men beneath me,
By choice is to be made, where shall I seek
But among those that best deserve from you?
That have served you most faithfully; that in dangers
Have stood next to you; that have interposed
Their breasts as shields of proof, to dull the swords
Aim'd at your bosom; that have spent their blood
To crown your brows with laurel?
Macr. Cytherea,
Great Queen of Love, be now propitious to me!
Harp. [*to Sap.*] Now mark what I foretold.
Anton. Her eye's on me.
Fair Venus' son, draw forth a leaden dart,
And, that she may hate me, transfix her with it;
Or, if thou needs wilt use a golden one,
Shoot it in the behalf of any other:
Thou know'st I am thy votary elsewhere. [*Aside.*
Artem. [*advances to Anton.*] Sir.
Theoph. How he blushes!
Sap. Welcome, fool, thy fortune.
Stand like a block when such an angel courts thee!
Artem. I am no object to divert your eye
From the beholding.
Anton. Rather a bright sun,
Too glorious for him to gaze upon,

That took not first flight from the eagle's aerie,
As I look on the temples, or the gods,
And with that reverence, lady, I behold you,
And shall do ever.

Artem. And it will become you,
While thus we stand at distance; but, if love,
Love borne out of the assurance of your virtues,
Teach me to stoop so low—

Anton. O, rather take
A higher flight.

Artem. Why, fear you to be raised?
Say I put off the dreadful awe that waits
On majesty, or with you share my beams,
Nay, make you to outshine me; change the name
Of Subject into Lord, rob you of service
That's due from you to me, and in me make it
Duty to honour you, would you refuse me?

Anton. Refuse you, madam! such a worm as I am
Refuse what kings upon their knees would sue for!
Call it, great lady, by another name;
An humble modesty, that would not match
A molehill with Olympus.

Artem. He that's famous
For honourable actions in the war,

As you are, Antoninus, a proved soldier,
Is fellow to a king.

Anton. If you love valour,
As 'tis a kingly virtue, seek it out,
And cherish it in a king; there it shines brightest,
And yields the bravest lustre. Look on Epire,
A prince, in whom it is incorporate;
And let it not disgrace him that he was
O'ercome by Cæsar; it was victory,
To stand so long against him: had you seen him,
How in one bloody scene he did discharge
The parts of a commander and a soldier,
Wise in direction, bold in execution;
You would have said, Great Cæsar's self excepted,
The world yields not his equal.

Artem. Yet I have heard,
Encountering him alone in the head of his troop,
You took him prisoner.

K. of Epire. 'Tis a truth, great princess:
I'll not detract from valour.

Anton. 'Twas mere fortune;
Courage had no hand in it.

Theoph. Did ever man
Strive so against his own good?

Sap. Spiritless villain!

How I am tortured! By the immortal gods,
I now could kill him.

Diocle. Hold, Sapritius, hold,
On our displeasure, hold!

Harp. Why, this would make
A father mad; 'tis not to be endured;
Your honour's tainted in't.

Sap. By heaven, it is:
I shall think of it.

Harp. 'Tis not to be forgotten.

Artem. Nay, kneel not, sir; I am no ravisher,
Nor so far gone in fond affection to you,
But that I can retire, my honour safe:—
Yet say, hereafter, that thou hast neglected
What, but seen in possession of another,
Will make thee mad with envy.

Anton. In her looks
Revenge is written.

Mac. As you love your life,
Study to appease her.

Anton. Gracious madam, hear me.

Artem. And be again refused?

Anton. The tender of
My life, my service, or, since you vouchsafe it,
My love, my heart, my all: and pardon me,

Pardon, dread princess, that I made some scruple
To leave a valley of security,
To mount up to the hill of majesty,
On which, the nearer Jove, the nearer lightning.
What knew I, but your grace made trial of me;
Durst I presume to embrace, where but to touch
With an unmanner'd hand was death? The fox,
When he saw first the forest's king, the lion,
Was almost dead with fear; the second view
Only a little daunted him; the third,
He durst salute him boldly: pray you, apply this;
And you shall find a little time will teach me
To look with more familiar eyes upon you,
Than duty yet allows me.

Sap. Well excused.

Artem. You may redeem all yet.

Diocle. And, that he may
Have means and opportunity to do so,
Artemia, I leave you my substitute
In fair Cæsarea.

Sap. And here, as yourself,
We will obey and serve her.

Diocle. Antoninus,
So you prove hers, I wish no other heir;
Think on't:—be careful of your charge, Theophilus;

Sapritius, be you my daughter's guardian.
Your company I wish, confederate princes,
In our Dalmatian wars: which finished
With victory I hope, and Maximinus,
Our brother and copartner in the empire,
At my request won to confirm as much,
The kingdoms I took from you we'll restore,
And make you greater than you were before.

[*Exeunt all but* ANTONINUS *and* MACRINUS.

Anton. Oh, I am lost for ever! lost, Macrinus!
The anchor of the wretched, hope, forsakes me,
And with one blast of Fortune all my light
Of happiness is put out.

Mac. You are like to those
That are ill only 'cause they are too well;
That, surfeiting in the excess of blessings,
Call their abundance want. What could you wish,
That is not fall'n upon you? honour, greatness,
Respect, wealth, favour, the whole world for a dower;
And with a princess, whose excelling form
Exceeds her fortune.

Anton. Yet poison still is poison,
Though drunk in gold; and all these flattering glories
To me, ready to starve, a painted banquet,
And no essential food. When I am scorch'd

With fire, can flames in any other quench me?
What is her love to me, greatness, or empire,
That am slave to another, who alone
Can give me ease or freedom?

Mac. Sir, you point at_
Your dotage on the scornful Dorothea:
Is she, though fair, the same day to be named
With best Artemia? In all their courses,
Wise men purpose their ends: with sweet Artemia,
There comes along pleasure, security,
Usher'd by all that in this life is precious:
With Dorothea (though her birth be noble,
The daughter to a senator of Rome,
By him left rich, yet with a private wealth,
And far inferior to yours) arrives
The emperor's frown, which, like a mortal plague,
Speaks death is near; the princess' heavy scorn,
Under which you will shrink; your father's fury,
Which to resist even piety forbids:—
And but remember that she stands suspected
A favourer of the Christian sect; she brings
Not danger, but assured destruction with her.
This truly weigh'd, one smile of great Artemia
Is to be cherish'd, and preferr'd before
All joys in Dorothea: therefore leave her.

Anton. In what thou think'st thou art most wise thou art
Grossly abused, Macrinus, and most foolish.
For any man to match above his rank,
Is but to sell his liberty. With Artemia
I still must live a servant; but enjoying
Divinest Dorothea, I shall rule,
Rule as becomes a husband: for the *danger*,
Or call it, if you will, *assured destruction*,
I slight it thus.—If, then, thou art my friend,
As I dare swear thou art, and wilt not take
A governor's place upon thee, be my helper.

Mac. You know I dare, and will do any thing;
Put me unto the test.

Anton. Go, then, Macrinus,
To Dorothea; tell her I have worn,
In all the battles I have fought, her figure,
Her figure in my heart, which, like a deity,
Hath still protected me. Thou canst speak well;
And of thy choicest language spare a little,
To make her understand how much I love her,
And how I languish for her. Bear these jewels,
Sent in the way of sacrifice, not service,
As to my goddess: all lets thrown behind me,
Or fears that may deter me, say, this morning

I mean to visit her by the name of friendship:—
No words to contradict this.

Mac. I am yours:
And, if my travail this way be ill spent,
Judge not my readier will by the event. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Room in DOROTHEA's *House.*

Enter DOROTHEA, *followed by* ANGELO *with a book and taper.*

Dor. MY book and taper.

Ang. Here, most holy mistress.

Dor. Thy voice sends forth such music, that I never
Was ravish'd with a more celestial sound.
Were every servant in the world like thee,

So full of goodness, angels would come down
To dwell with us: thy name is Angelo,
And like that name thou art; get thee to rest,
Thy youth with too much watching is opprest.

Ang. No, my dear lady, I could weary stars,
And force the wakeful moon to lose her eyes,
By my late watching, but to wait on you.
When at your prayers you kneel before the altar,
Methinks I'm singing with some quire in heaven,
So blest I hold me in your company;
Therefore, my most loved mistress, do not bid
Your boy, so serviceable, to get hence;
For then you break his heart.

Dor. Be nigh me still, then:
In golden letters down I 'll set that day,
Which gave thee to me. Little did I hope
To meet such worlds of comfort in thyself,
This little, pretty body; when I, coming
Forth of the temple, heard my beggar-boy,
My sweet-faced, godly beggar-boy, crave an alms,
Which with glad hand I gave, with lucky hand!—
And, when I took thee home, my most chaste bosom,
Methought, was fill'd with no hot wanton fire,
But with a holy flame, mounting since higher,
On wings of cherubins, than it did before.

Ang. Proud am I, that my lady's modest eye
So likes so poor a servant.
Dor. I have offer'd
Handfuls of gold but to behold thy parents.
I would leave kingdoms, were I queen of some,
To dwell with thy good father; for, the youth
Bewitching me so deeply with his presence,
Who calls him son must do it ten times more.
I pray thee, my sweet boy, show me thy parents;
Be not ashamed.
Ang. I am not: I did never
Know who my mother was; but, by yon palace,
Fill'd with bright heavenly courtiers, I dare assure you,
And pawn these eyes upon it, and this hand,
My father is in heaven: and, pretty mistress,
If your illustrious hour-glass spend his sand,
No worse than yet it does; upon my life,
You and I both shall meet my father there,
And he shall bid you welcome.
Dor. A blessed day!
We all long to be there, but lose the way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Street, near DOROTHEA'*s House.*

Enter MACRINUS, *met by* THEOPHILUS *and* HARPAX.

Theoph. The Sun, god of the day, guide thee, Macrinus!
Mac. And thee, Theophilus!
Theoph. Glad'st thou in such scorn?
I call my wish back.
Mac. I 'm in haste.
Theoph. One word,
Take the least hand of time up:—stay.
Mac. Be brief.
Theoph. As thought: I prithee tell me, good Macrinus,
How our fair princess was in health this night,
For you can tell; courtiers have flies,
That buzz all news unto them.
Mac. She slept but ill.
Theoph. Double thy courtesy; how does Antoninus?

Mac. Ill, well, straight, crooked,—I know not how.

Theoph. Once more;—

Thy head is full of windmills: — when doth the princess
Bestow herself on noble Antoninus?

Mac. I know not.

Theoph. No! thou art the manuscript,
Where Antoninus writes down all his secrets:
Honest Macrinus, tell me.

Mac. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Harp. Honesty is some fiend, and frights him hence;
A many courtiers love it not.

Theoph. What piece
Of this state-wheel, which winds up Antoninus,
Is broke, it runs so jarringly? the man
Is from himself divided: O thou, the eye
By which I wonders see, tell me, my Harpax,
What gad-fly tickles this Macrinus so,
That, flinging up the tail, he breaks thus from me.

Harp. Oh, sir, his brain-pan is a bed of snakes,
Whose stings shoot through his eye-balls, whose poisonous spawn
Ingenders such a fry of speckled villanies,
That, unless charms more strong than adamant

Be used, the Roman angel's* wings shall melt,
And Cæsar's diadem be from his head
Spurn'd by base feet; the laurel which he wears,
Returning victor, be enforced to kiss
That which it hates, the fire. And can this ram,
This Antoninus-Engine, being made ready
To so much mischief, keep a steady motion?—
His eyes and feet, you see, give strange assaults.

Theoph. I'm turn'd a marble statue at thy language,
Which printed is in such crabb'd characters,
It puzzles all my reading: what, in the name
Of Pluto, now is hatching?

Harp. This Macrinus,
The line is, upon which love-errands run
'Twixt Antoninus and that ghost of women,
The bloodless Dorothea; who in prayer
And meditation, mocking all your gods,
Drinks up her ruby colour: yet Antoninus
Plays the Endymion to this pale-faced Moon,
Courts, seeks to catch her eyes—

Theoph. And what of this?

Harp. These are but creeping billows,
Not got to shore yet: but if Dorothea

* *i. e.* The *Roman eagle*, the well-known military ensign. *Angel*, in the sense of *bird*, is frequently met with among our old writers.

Fall on his bosom, and be fired with love,
(Your coldest women do so)—had you ink
Brew'd from the infernal Styx, not all that blackness
Can make a thing so foul, as the dishonours,
Disgraces, buffetings, and most base affronts
Upon the bright Artemia, star o' the court,
Great Cæsar's daughter.

Theoph. I now conster* thee.

Harp. Nay, more; a firmament of clouds, being fill'd
With Jove's artillery, shot down at once,
To pash† your gods in pieces, cannot give,
With all those thunderbolts, so deep a blow
To the religion there, and pagan lore,
As this; for Dorothea hates your gods,
And, if she once blast Antoninus' soul,
Making it foul like hers, oh! the example—

Theoph. Eats through Cæsarea's heart like liquid poison.

Have I invented tortures to tear Christians,
To see but which, could all that feel hell's torments
Have leave to stand aloof here on earth's stage,

* *Conster—understand.*

† *Pash, to strike a thing with such force as to dash it to pieces.*

ıey would be mad till they again descended,
olding the pains most horrid of such souls,
ay-games to those of mine; has this my hand
:t down a Christian's execution
such dire postures, that the very hangman
:ll at my foot dead, hearing but their figures;
ıd shall Macrinus and his fellow-masquer
ırangle me in a dance?

Harp. No:—on; I hug thee,
)r drilling thy quick brains in this rich plot
f tortures 'gainst these Christians: on; I hug thee!

Theoph. Both hug and holy me: to this Dorothea,
y thou and I in thunder.

Harp. Not for kingdoms
led upon kingdoms: there's a villain page
'aits on her, whom I would not for the world
old traffic with; I do so hate his sight,
ıat, should I look on him, I must sink down.

Theoph. I will not lose thee, then, her to confound:
one but this head with glories shall be crown'd.

Harp. Oh! mine own as I would wish thee!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Hall in DOROTHEA's *House, with a gallery abov*

Enter DOROTHEA, MACRINUS, *and* ANGELO.

Dor. My trusty Angelo, with that curious eye
Of thine, which ever waits upon my business,
I prithee watch those my still-negligent servants,
That they perform my will, in what's enjoined the
To the good of others. Be careful, my dear boy.
Ang. Yes, my sweetest mistress. [*Ex*
Dor. Now, sir, you may go on.
Mac. I then must study
A new arithmetic, to sum up the virtues
Which Antoninus gracefully become.
There is in him so much man, so much goodness,
So much of honour, and of all things else,
Which make our being excellent, that from his stc
He can enough lend others; yet, much ta'en from hi
The want shall be as little, as when seas
Lend from their bounty, to fill up the poorness
Of needy rivers.

Dor. Sir, he is more indebted
To you for praise, than you to him that owes it.
Mac. If queens, viewing his presents paid to the whiteness
Of your chaste hand alone, should be ambitious
But to be parted* in their numerous shares;
This he counts nothing: could you see main armies
Make battles in the quarrel of his valour,
That 'tis the best, the truest; this were nothing:
The greatness of his state, his father's voice,
And arm, awing Cæsarea, he ne'er boasts of;
The sunbeams which the emperor throws upon him
Shine there but as in water, and gild him
Not with one spot of pride: no, dearest beauty,
All these, heap'd up together in one scale,
Cannot weigh down the love he bears to you,
Being put into the other.
Dor. Could gold buy you
To speak thus for a friend, you, sir, are worthy
Of more than I will number; and this your language
Hath power to win upon another woman,
'Top of whose heart the feathers of this world
Are gaily stuck: but all which first you named,
And now this last—his love—to me are nothing.

* *Parted,—endowed with a part.*

Mac. You make me a sad messenger;—but himself

Enter ANTONINUS.

Being come in person, shall, I hope, hear from you
Music more pleasing.

Anton. Has your ear, Macrinus,
Heard none, then?

Mac. None I like.

Anton. But can there be
In such a noble casket, wherein lie
Beauty and chastity in their full perfections,
A rocky heart, killing with cruelty
A life that 's prostrated beneath your feet?

Dor. I am guilty of a shame I yet ne'er knew,
Thus to hold parley with you;—pray, sir, pardon.
[*Going.*

Anton. Good sweetness, you now have it, and shall go;
Be but so merciful, before your wounding me
With such a mortal weapon as that farewell,
To let me murmur to your virgin ear,
What I was loth to lay on any tongue
But this mine own.

Dor. If one immodest accent
Fly out, I hate you everlastingly.
Anton. My true love dares not do it.
Mac. Hermes inspire thee!

Enter, in the gallery above, ARTEMIA, SAPRITIUS, *and* THEOPHILUS.

Anton. Come, let me tune you:—glaze not thus your eyes
With self-love of a vow'd virginity;
All men desire your sweet society,
But if you bar me from it, you do kill me,
And of my blood are guilty.
Artem. O base villain!
Sap. Bridle your rage, sweet princess.
Anton. Could not my fortunes,
Rear'd higher far than yours, be worthy of you,
Methinks my dear affection makes you mine.
Dor. Sir, for your fortunes, were they mines of gold,
He that I love is richer; and for worth,
You are to him lower than any slave
Is to a monarch.
Sap. So insolent, base Christian!

Dor. Can I, with wearing out my knees before him,
Get you but be his servant, you shall boast
You 're equal to a king.
Sap. Confusion on thee,
For playing thus the lying sorceress!
Anton. Your mocks are great ones; none beneath the sun
Will I be servant to.—On my knees I beg it,
Pity me, wondrous maid.
Sap. I curse thy baseness.
Theoph. Listen to more.
Dor. O kneel not, sir, to me.
Anton. This knee is emblem of an humbled heart:
That heart which tortured is with your disdain,
Justly for scorning others, even this heart,
To which for pity such a princess sues,
As in her hand offers me all the world,
Great Cæsar's daughter.
Artem. Slave, thou liest.
Anton. Yet this
Is adamant to her, that melts to you
In drops of blood.
Theoph. A very dog!
Anton. Perhaps

THE VIRGIN MARTYR.

'Tis my religion makes you knit the brow;
Yet be you mine, and ever be your own
I ne'er will screw your conscience from that Power,
On which you Christians lean.

Sap. I can no longer
Fret out my life with weeping at thee, villain.
Sirrah! [*Aloud.*
Would, ere thy birth, the mighty Thunderer's hand
Had struck thee dead!

Mac. We are betray'd!

Artem. Is that the idol, traitor! which thou kneel'st to,
Trampling upon my beauty?

Theoph. Sirrah, bandog!
Wilt thou in pieces tear our Jupiter
For her? our Mars for her? our Sol for her?

Artem. Threaten not, but strike: quick vengeance flies
Into my bosom; caitiff! here all love dies.
[*Exeunt above.*

Anton. O! I am thunderstruck! We are both o'erwhelm'd———

Mac. With one high-raging billow.

Dor. You a soldier,
And sink beneath the violence of a woman!

Anton. A woman! a wrong'd princess. From such a star
Blazing with fires of hate, what can be look'd for,
But tragical events? my life is now
The subject of her tyranny.

Dor. That fear is base,
Of death, when that death doth but life displace
Out of her house of earth; you only dread
The stroke, and not what follows when you're dead;
There's the great fear, indeed: come, let your eyes
Dwell where mine do, you'll scorn their tyrannies.

Re-enter below, ARTEMIA, SAPRITIUS, THEOPHILUS, *a guard;* ANGELO *comes and stands close by* DOROTHEA.

Artem. My father's nerves put vigour in mine arm,
And I his strength must use. Because I once
Shed beams of favour on thee, and, with the lion,
Play'd with thee gently, when thou struck'st my heart,
I'll not insult on a base, humbled prey,
By lingering out thy terrors; but, with one frown,
Kill thee:—hence with them all to execution!
Seize him; but let even death itself be weary

In torturing her. I'll change those smiles to shrieks;
Give the fool what she's proud of—martyrdom:
In pieces rack that pander. [*Points to* MACR.

Sap. Albeit the reverence
I owe our gods and you, are, in my bosom,
Torrents so strong, that pity quite lies drown'd
From saving this young man; yet, when I see
What face death gives him, and that a thing within me
Says, 'tis my son, I am forced to be a man,
And grow fond of his life, which thus I beg.

Artem. And I deny.

Anton. Sir, you dishonour me,
To sue for that which I disclaim to have.
I shall more glory in my sufferings gain,
Than you in giving judgment, since I offer
My blood up to your anger; nor do I kneel
To keep a wretched life of mine from ruin:
Preserve this temple, builded fair as yours is,
And Cæsar never went in greater triumph
Than I shall to the scaffold.

Artem. Are you so brave, sir?
Set forward to his triumph, and let those two
Go cursing along with him.

Dor. No, but pitying,

I, for my part, that you lose ten times more
By torturing me, than I that dare your tortures:
Through all the army of my sins, I have even
Labour'd to break, and cope with death to the face.
The visage of a hangman frights not me;
The sight of whips, racks, gibbets, axes, fires,
Are scaffoldings by which my soul climbs up
To an eternal habitation.

Theoph. Cæsar's imperial daughter, hear me speak
Let not this Christian thing in this her pageantry
Of proud deriding both our gods and Cæsar,
Build to herself a kingdom in her death,
Going laughing from us: no; her bitterest torment
Shall be, to feel her constancy beaten down;
The bravery of her resolution lie
Batter'd, by argument, into such pieces,
That she again in penitence shall creep
To kiss the pavements of our paynim gods.

Artem. How to be done?

Theoph. I'll send my daughters to her,
And they shall turn her rocky faith to wax;
Else spit at me, let me be made your slave,
And meet no Roman's but a villain's grave.

Artem. Thy prisoner let her be, then; and, Sapri-
tius,

Your son and that,* be yours: death shall be sent
To him that suffers them, by voice or letters,
To greet each other. Rifle her estate;
Christians to beggary brought grow desperate.

Dor. Still on the bread of poverty let me feed.

Ang. O! my admired mistress, quench not out
The holy fires within you, though temptations
Shower down upon you: Clasp thine armour on,
Fight well, and thou shalt see, after these wars,
Thy head wear sunbeams, and thy feet touch stars.

[*Exeunt.*

* *Your son and* that.—Macrinus, whom before she had called a pander.

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in DOROTHEA'*s House.*

Enter SAPRITIUS, THEOPHILUS, *Priest*, CALISTA, *and* CHRISTETA.

Sap. Sick to the death, I fear.
Theoph. I meet your sorrow,
With my true feeling of it.
Sap. She's a witch,
A sorceress, Theophilus; my son

Is charm'd by her enchanting eyes; and, like
An image made of wax, her beams of beauty
Melt him to nothing: all my hopes in him,
And all his gotten honours, find their grave
In his strange dotage on her. Would, when first
He saw and loved her, that the earth had open'd,
And swallow'd both alive!

Theoph. There's hope left yet.

Sap. Not any: though the princess were appeased,
All title in her love surrender'd up;
Yet this coy Christian is so transported
With her religion, that unless my son
(But let him perish first!) drink the same potion,
And be of her belief, she'll not vouchsafe
To be his lawful wife.

Priest. But, once removed
From her opinion, as I rest assured
The reasons of these holy maids will win her,
You'll find her tractable to any thing,
For your content or his.

Theoph. If she refuse it,
The Stygian damps, breeding infectious airs,
The mandrake's shrieks, the basilisk's killing eye,
The dreadful lightning that does crush the bones,
And never singe the skin, shall not appear

Less fatal to her, than my zeal made hot
With love unto my gods. I have deferr'd it,
In hopes to draw back this apostata—
Which will be greater honour than her death—
Unto her father's faith; and, to that end,
Have brought my daughters hither.

Cal. And we doubt not
To do what you desire.

Sap. Let her be sent for.
Prosper in your good work; and were I not
To attend the princess, I would see and hear
How you succeed.

Theoph. I am commanded too,
I'll bear you company.

Sap. Give them your ring,
To lead her as in triumph, if they win her,
Before her highness. [*Exit.*

Theoph. Spare no promises,
Persuasions, or threats, I do conjure you:
If you prevail, 'tis the most glorious work
You ever undertook.

Enter DOROTHEA *and* ANGELO.

Priest. She comes.

Theoph. We leave you;

Be constant, and be careful.

[*Exeunt* THEOPH. *and Priest.*

Cal. We are sorry
To meet you under guard.

Dor. But I more grieved
You are at liberty. So well I love you,
That I could wish, for such a cause as mine,
You were my fellow-prisoners: Prithee, Angelo,
Reach us some chairs. Please you sit——

Cal. We thank you:
Our visit is for love, love to your safety.

Christ. Our conference must be private; pray you, therefore,
Command your boy to leave us.

Dor. You may trust him
With any secret that concerns my life;
Falsehood and he are strangers: had you, ladies,
Been bless'd with such a servant, you had never
Forsook that way, your journey even half ended
That leads to joys eternal. In the place
Of loose lascivious mirth, he would have stirr'd you
To holy meditations; and so far
He is from flattery, that he would have told you,
Your pride being at the height, how miserable
And wretched things you were, that, for an hour

Of pleasure here, have made a desperate sale
Of all your right in happiness hereafter.
He must not leave me; without him I fall:
In this life he 's my servant, in the other
A wish'd companion.

Ang. 'Tis not in the devil,
Nor all his wicked arts, to shake such goodness.

Dor. But you were speaking, lady.

Cal. As a friend
And lover of your safety, and I pray you
So to receive it; and, if you remember
How near in love our parents were, that we,
Even from the cradle, were brought up together,
Our amity increasing with our years,
We cannot stand suspected.

Dor. To the purpose.

Cal. We come, then, as good angels, Dorothea,
To make you happy; and the means so easy
That, be not you an enemy to yourself,
Already you enjoy it.

Christ. Look on us,
Ruin'd as you are, once, and brought unto it,
By your persuasion.

Cal. But what follow'd, lady?
Leaving those blessings which our gods gave freely,

And shower'd upon us with a prodigal hand,
As to be noble born, youth, beauty, wealth,
And the free use of these without control,
Check, curb, or stop, such is our law's indulgence!
All happiness forsook us; bonds and fetters,
For amorous twines; the rack and hangman's whips,
In place of choice delights; our parents' curses
Instead of blessings; scorn, neglect, contempt,
Fell thick upon us.

Christ. This consider'd wisely,
We made a fair retreat; and, reconciled
To our forsaken gods, we live again
In all prosperity.

Cal. By our example,
Bequeathing misery to such as love it,
Learn to be happy. The Christian yoke's too heavy
For such a dainty neck; it was framed rather
To be the shrine of Venus, or a pillar,
More precious than crystal, to support
Our Cupid's image: our religion, lady,
Is but a varied pleasure; yours a toil
Slaves would shrink under.

Dor. Have you not cloven feet? are you not devils?
Dare any say so much, or dare I hear it

Without a virtuous and religious anger?
Now to put on a virgin modesty,
Or maiden silence, when His power is question'd
That is omnipotent, were a greater crime,
Than in a bad cause to be impudent.
Your gods! your temples! brothel-houses rather,
Or wicked actions of the worst of men,
Pursued and practised. Your religious rites!
Oh! call them rather juggling mysteries—
The baits and nets of hell: your souls the prey
For which the devil angles; your false pleasures
A steep descent, by which you headlong fall
Into eternal torments.

Cal. Do not tempt
Our powerful gods.

Dor. Which of your powerful gods?
Your gold, your silver, brass, or wooden ones,
That can nor do me hurt, nor protect you?
Most pitied women! will you sacrifice
To such,—or call them gods or goddesses,
Your parents would disdain to be the same,
Or you yourselves? O blinded ignorance!
Tell me, Calista, by thy truth, I charge you,
Or any thing you hold more dear, would you,
To have him deified to posterity,

Desire your father an adulterer,
A ravisher, almost a parricide,
A vile incestuous wretch?
Cal. That, piety
And duty answer for me.
Dor. Or you, Christeta,
To be hereafter register'd a goddess,
Give your chaste body up to the embraces
Of wicked passion? have it writ on your forehead,
"This is the mistress in the art of sin;
Knows every trick, and labyrinth of desires
That are immodest?"
Christ. You judge better of me,
Or my affection is ill placed on you.
Shall I turn wanton?
Dor. No, I think you would not.
Yet such was Venus, whom you worship; such
Flora, the foundress of the public stews,
And has, for that, her sacrifice; your Jupiter,
A loose adulterer:—read ye but those
That have canonized them, you 'll find them worse
Than, in chaste language, I can speak them to you.
Are they immortal, then, that did partake
Of human weakness, and had ample share
In men's most base affections; subject to

Unchaste loves, anger, bondage, wounds, as men are?
Here, Jupiter, to serve his lust, turn'd bull,
The shape, indeed, in which he stole Europa;
Neptune, for gain, builds up the walls of Troy,
As a day-labourer; Apollo keeps
Admetus' sheep for bread; the Lemnian smith
Sweats at the forge for hire; Prometheus here,
With his still-growing liver, feeds the vulture;
Saturn bound fast in hell with adamant chains;
And thousands more, on whom abused error
Bestows a deity. Will you, then, dear sisters,
For I would have you such, pay your devotions
To things of less power than yourselves?

Cal. We worship
Their good deeds in their images.

Dor. By whom fashion'd?
By sinful men. I 'll tell you a short tale;
Nor can you but confess it is a true one.
A king of Egypt, being to erect
The image of Osiris, whom they honour,
Took from the matrons' necks the richest jewels,
And purest gold, as the materials
To finish up his work; which perfected,
With all solemnity he set it up,

o be adored, and served himself his idol;
esiring it to give him victory
gainst his enemies: but, being overthrown,
ıraged against his god, (these are fine gods,
ıbject to human fury!) he took down
ıe senseless thing, and melting it again,
e made a bason, in which eunuchs wash'd
is concubine's feet; and for this sordid use,
ıme months it served: his mistress proving false,
ı most indeed do so, and grace concluded
:tween him and the priests, of the same bason
e made his god again!—Think, think, of this,
ıd then consider, if all worldly honours,
· pleasures that do leave sharp stings behind them,
ıve power to win such as have reasonable souls,
ı put their trust in dross.

Cal. Oh, that I had been born
ithout a father!

Christ. Piety to him
ıth ruin'd us for ever.

Dor. Think not so;
u may repair all yet: the attribute
at speaks his Godhead most, is merciful:
venge is proper to the fiends you worship,
t cannot strike without his leave.—You weep,—

Oh, 'tis a heavenly shower! celestial balm
To cure your wounded conscience! let it fall,
Fall thick upon it; and, when that is spent,
I 'll help it with another of my tears:
And may your true repentance prove the child
Of my true sorrow, never mother had
A birth so happy!

Cal. We are caught ourselves,
That came to take you; and, assured of conquest,
We are your captives.

Dor. And in that you triumph,
Your victory had been eternal loss,
And this your loss immortal gain. Fix here,
And you shall feel yourselves inwardly arm'd
'Gainst tortures, death, and hell:—but, take he
sisters,
That, or through weakness, threats, or mild p
suasions,
Though of a father, you fall not into
A second and a worse apostasy.

Cal. Never, oh never! steel'd by your example,
We dare the worst of tyranny.

Christ. Here 's our warrant,
You shall along and witness it.

Dor. Be confirm'd then;

And rest assured, the more you suffer here,
The more your glory—you to heaven more dear.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The GOVERNOR'S *Palace.*

Enter ARTEMIA, SAPRITIUS, THEOPHILUS, *and* HARPAX.

Artem. Sapritius, though your son deserve no pity,
We grieve his sickness: his contempt of us
We cast behind us, and look back upon
His service done to Cæsar, that weighs down
Our just displeasure. If his malady
Have growth from his restraint, or that you think
His liberty can cure him, let him have it:
Say, we forgive him freely.

Sap. Your grace binds us
Ever your humblest vassals.

Artem. Use all means
For his recovery; though yet I love him,
I will not force affection. If the Christian,
Whose beauty hath out-rivall'd me, be won

To be of our belief, then let him wed her;
That all may know, when the cause wills, I can
Command my own affections.

Theoph. Be happy, then,
My lord Sapritius: I am confident,
Such eloquence and sweet persuasion dwell
Upon my daughters' tongues, that they will work her
To any thing they please.

Sap. I wish they may!
Yet 'tis no easy task to undertake,
To alter a perverse and obstinate woman.

[*A shout within—loud music.*

Artem. What means this shout?

Sap. It is seconded with music,
Triumphant music.—Ha!

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

Semp. My lord, your daughters,
The pillars of our faith, having converted,
For so report gives out, the Christian lady,
The image of great Jupiter borne before them,
Sue for access.

Theoph. My soul divined as much.
Blest be the time when first they saw this light!
Their mother, when she bore them to support

My feeble age, fill'd not my longing heart
With so much joy, as they in this good work
Have thrown upon me.

Enter Priest with the Image of Jupiter, incense and censers: followed by CALISTA *and* CHRISTETA, *leading* DOROTHEA.

Welcome, oh, thrice welcome,
Daughters, both of my body and my mind!
Let me embrace in you my bliss, my comfort;
And, Dorothea, now more welcome too,
Than if you never had fallen off! I am ravish'd
With the excess of joy:—speak, happy daughters,
The blest event.

Cal. We never gain'd so much
By any undertaking.

Theoph. O my dear girl,
Our gods reward thee!

Dor. Nor was ever time,
On my part, better spent.

Christ. We are all now
Of one opinion.

Theoph. My best Christeta!
Madam, if ever you did grace to worth,
Vouchsafe your princely hands.

Artem. Most willingly——
Do you refuse it?
Cal. Let us first deserve it.
Theoph. My own child still! here set our god; prepare
The incense quickly: Come, fair Dorothea,
I will myself support you;—now kneel down,
And pay your vows to Jupiter.
Dor. I shall do it
Better by their example.
Theoph. They shall guide you,
They are familiar with the sacrifice;
Forward, my twins of comfort, and, to teach her,
Make a joint offering.
Christ. Thus—— [*they both spit at the image.*
Cal. And thus—— [*throw it down, and spurn it.*
Harp. Profane,
And impious! stand you now like a statue?
Are you the champion of the gods? where is
Your holy zeal, your anger?
Theoph. I am blasted;
And, as my feet were rooted here, I find
I have no motion; I would I had no sight too!
Or if my eyes can serve to any use,
Give me, thou injured power! a sea of tears,

To expiate this madness in my daughters;
For, being themselves, they would have trembled at
So blasphemous a deed in any other:——
For my sake, hold awhile thy dreadful thunder,
And give me patience to demand a reason
For this accursed act.

Dor. 'Twas bravely done.

Theoph. Peace, damn'd enchantress, peace!—I should look on you
With eyes made red with fury, and my hand,
That shakes with rage, should much outstrip my tongue,
And seal my vengeance on your hearts;—but nature,
To you that have fallen once, bids me again
To be a father. Oh! how durst you tempt
The anger of great Jove?

Dor. Alack, poor Jove!
He is no swaggerer; how still he stands!
He'll take a kick, or any thing.

Sap. Stop her mouth.

Dor. It is the patient'st godling! do not fear him;
He would not hurt the thief that stole away
Two of his golden locks; indeed he could not:
And still 'tis the same quiet thing.

Theoph. Blasphemer!

Ingenious cruelty shall punish this;
Thou art past hope: but for you yet, dear daughters,
Again bewitch'd, the dew of mild forgiveness
May gently fall, provided you deserve it,
With true contrition: be yourselves again;
Sue to the offended deity.

Christ. Not to be
The mistress of the earth.

Cal. I will not offer
A grain of incense to it, much less kneel,
Nor look on it but with contempt and scorn,
To have a thousand years conferr'd upon me
Of worldly blessings. We profess ourselves
To be, like Dorothea, Christians;
And owe her for that happiness.

Theoph. My ears
Receive, in hearing this, all deadly charms,
Powerful to make man wretched.

Artem. Are these they
You bragg'd could convert others?

Sap. That want strength
To stand themselves!

Harp. Your honour is engaged,
The credit of your cause depends upon it;
Something you must do suddenly.

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Theoph. And I will.

Harp. They merit death; but, falling by your hand,
'Twill be recorded for a just revenge,
And holy fury in you.

Theoph. Do not blow
The furnace of a wrath thrice hot already;
Ætna is in my breast, wildfire burns here,
Which only blood must quench. Incensed Power!
Which from my infancy I have adored,
Look down with favourable beams upon
The sacrifice, though not allow'd thy priest,
Which I will offer to thee; and be pleased,
My fiery zeal inciting me to act,
To call that justice others may style murder.
Come, you accursed, thus by the hair I drag you
Before this holy altar; thus look on you,
Less pitiful than tigers to their prey:
And thus, with mine own hand, I take that life
Which I gave to you. [*Kills them.*

Dor. O most cruel butcher!

Theoph. My anger ends not here: hell's dreadful porter,
Receive into thy ever-open gates
Their damned souls, and let the Furies' whips

On them alone be wasted; and, when death
Closes these eyes, 'twill be Elysium to me
To hear their shrieks and howlings. Make me, Pluto,
Thy instrument to furnish thee with souls
Of that accursed sect; nor let me fall,
Till my fell vengeance hath consumed them all.
[*Exit, with* HARPAX.

Artem. 'Tis a brave zeal.

Enter ANGELO, *smiling.*

Dor. Oh, call him back again!
Call back your hangman! here's one prisoner left
To be the subject of his knife.

Artem. Not so;
We are not so near reconciled unto thee;
Thou shalt not perish such an easy way.
Be she your charge, Sapritius, now; and suffer
None to come near her, till we have found out
Some torments worthy of her.

Ang. Courage, mistress;
These martyrs but prepare your glorious fate:
You shall exceed them, and not imitate. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Governor's Palace.

ANTONINUS *on a couch, asleep, with Doctors about him;* SAPRITIUS *and* MACRINUS.

Sap. O you, that are half gods, lengthen that life
Their deities lend us; turn o'er all the volumes
Of your mysterious Esculapian science,
T' increase the number of this young man's days:
And, for each minute of his time prolong'd,

Your fee shall be a piece of Roman gold
With Cæsar's stamp, such as he sends his captains
When in the wars they earn well: do but save him,
And, as he 's half myself, be you all mine.

1 *Doct.* What art can do, we promise; physic's hand
As apt is to destroy as to preserve,
If Heaven make not the med'cine: all this while,
Our skill hath combat held with his disease;
But 'tis so arm'd, and a deep melancholy,
To be such in part with death, we are in fear
The grave must mock our labours.

Mac. I have been
His keeper in this sickness, with such eyes
As I have seen my mother watch o'er me.
Stand by his pillow, and, in his broken slumbers,
Him shall you hear cry out on Dorothea;
And, when his arms fly open to catch her,
Closing together, he falls fast asleep,
Pleased with embracings of her airy form.
Physicians but torment him; his disease
Laughs at their gibberish language: let him hear
The voice of Dorothea, nay, but the name,
He starts up with high colour in his face:
She, or none, cures him; and how that can be,

The princess' strict command barring that happiness,
To me impossible seems.

Sap. To me it shall not;
I 'll be no subject to the greatest Cæsar
Was ever crown'd with laurel, rather than cease
To be a father. [*Exit.*

Mac. Silence, sir; he wakes.

Anton. Thou kill'st me, Dorothea; oh, Dorothea!

Mac. She's here.

Anton. Here! Where? Why do you mock me, sir?
Age on my head hath stuck no white hairs yet,
Yet I'm an old man, a fond doting fool
Upon a woman. I, to buy her beauty,
(In truth I am bewitch'd) offer my life,
And she, for my acquaintance, hazards hers:
Yet, for our equal sufferings, none holds out
A hand of pity.

1 *Doct.* Let him have some music.

Anton. Hell on your fiddling! [*Starting from his couch.*

1 *Doct.* Take again your bed, sir;
Sleep is a sovereign physic.

Anton. Confusion on your fooleries! Where 's the rest
Thy pills and base apothecary drugs

Threaten'd to bring unto me? Out, you impost
Quacksalving, cheating mountebanks!-your skil
Is to make sound men sick, and sick men kill.

Mac. Oh, be yourself, dear friend.

Anton. Myself, Macrinus;
How can I be myself, when I am mangled
Into a thousand pieces? Here moves my head,
But where's my heart? wherever—that lies de

Re-enter SAPRITIUS, *dragging in* DOROTHEA *by hair*, ANGELO *following*.

Sap. Follow me, thou damn'd sorceress! Cal
thy spirits,
And, if they can, now let them from my hand
Untwine these witching hairs.

Anton. I am that spirit:
Or, if I be not, were you not my father,
One made of iron should hew that hand in piec
That so defaces this sweet monument
Of my love's beauty.

Sap. Art thou sick?

Anton. To death.

Sap. Would'st thou recover?

Anton. Would I live in bliss?

Sap. And do thine eyes shoot daggers at that man
That brings thee health?

Anton. It is not in the world.

Sap. It's here.

Anton. To treasure, by enchantment lock'd
In caves as deep as hell, am I as near.

1 *Doct.* Shall the boy stay, sir?

Sap. No matter for the boy.

[*Exeunt* Sap. Mac. *and Doct.*

Dor. O, guard me, angels!
What tragedy must begin now?

Anton. When a tiger
Leaps into a timorous herd, with ravenous jaws,
Being hunger-starved, what tragedy then begins?

Dor. Death; I am happy so: you, hitherto,
Have still had goodness sphered within your eyes;
Let not that orb be broken.

Ang. Fear not, mistress;
If he dare offer violence, we two
Are strong enough for such a sickly man.

Dor. What is your horrid purpose, sir? your eye
Bears danger in it.

Anton. I must ——

Dor. Oh, kill me, [*Kneels.*
And heaven will take it as a sacrifice;

But, if you play the ravisher, there is
A hell to swallow you.

Anton. Rise:—for the Roman empire, Dorothea,
I would not wound thine honour. My father's will
Would have me seize upon you, as my prey;
Which I abhor, as much as the blackest sin
The villany of man did ever act.

[SAPRITIUS *breaks in with* MACRINUS.

Dor. Die happy for this language!

Sap. Die a slave,
A blockish idiot!

Mac. Dear sir, vex him not.

Sap. Yes, and vex thee too: where is this sorceress?

Dor. I 'm here; do what you please.

Sap. Spurn her to the bar.

Dor. Come, boy, being there, more near to heaven we are.

Sap. Kick harder; go out, witch! [*Exeunt.*

Anton. O bloody hangmen! Thine own gods give thee breath!
Each of thy tortures is my several death. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Place of Execution. A scaffold, block, &c.

Enter ANTONINUS, *supported by* MACRINUS, *and Servants.*

Anton. Is this the place where virtue is to suffer,
And heavenly beauty, leaving this base earth,
To make a glad return from whence it came?
Is it, Macrinus?

Mac. By this preparation,
You well may rest assured that Dorothea
This hour is to die here.

Anton. Then with her dies
The abstract of all sweetness that's in woman!
Set me down, friend, that, ere the iron hand
Of death close up mine eyes, they may at once
Take my last leave both of this light and her:
For, she being gone, the glorious sun himself
To me's Cimmerian darkness.

Mac. Strange affection!
Cupid once more hath changed his shafts with Death,
And kills, instead of giving life.

Anton. Nay, weep not;
Though tears of friendship be a sovereign balm,

On me they're cast away. It is decreed
That I must die with her; our clue of life
Was spun together.

Mac. Yet, sir, 'tis my wonder,
That you, who, hearing only what she suffers,
Partake of all her tortures, yet will be,
To add to your calamity, an eye-witness
Of her last tragic scene, which must pierce deeper,
And make the wound more desperate.

Anton. Oh, Macrinus!
'Twould linger out my torments else, not kill me,
Which is the end I aim at: being to die too,
What instrument more glorious can I wish for,
Than what is made sharp by my constant love
And true affection? It may be, the duty
And loyal service, with which I pursued her,
And seal'd it with my death, will be remember'd
Among her blessed actions; and what honour
Can I desire beyond it?

Enter a Guard bringing in DOROTHEA, *a Headsman before her; followed by* THEOPHILUS, SAPRITIUS, *and* HARPAX.

See, she comes;
How sweet her innocence appears! more like

To heaven itself, than any sacrifice
That can be offer'd to it. By my hopes
Of joys hereafter, the sight makes me doubtful
In my belief; nor can I think our gods
Are good, or to be served, that take delight
In offerings of this kind: that to maintain
Their power, deface the master-piece of nature,
Which they themselves come short of. She ascends,
And every step raises her nearer heaven.

Sap. You are to blame
To let him come abroad.

Mac. It was his will;
And we were left to serve him, not command him.

Anton. Good sir, be not offended; nor deny
My last of pleasures in this happy object,
That I shall e'er be blest with.

Theoph. Now, proud contemner
Of us, and of our gods, tremble to think,
It is not in the Power thou serv'st to save thee.
Not all the riches of the sea, increased
By violent shipwrecks, nor the unsearch'd mines,
(Mammon's unknown exchequer,) shall redeem thee:
And, therefore, having first with horror weigh'd
What 'tis to die, and to die young; to part with
All pleasures and delights; lastly, to go

Where all antipathies to comfort dwell,
Furies behind, about thee, and before thee;
And, to add to affliction, the remembrance
Of the Elysian joys thou might'st have tasted,
Hadst thou not turn'd apostate to those gods
That so reward their servants; let despair
Prevent the hangman's sword, and on this scaffold
Make thy first entrance into hell.

Anton. She smiles
Unmoved, by Mars! as if she were assured
Death, looking on her constancy, would forget
The use of his inevitable hand.

Theoph. Derided too! despatch, I say!

Dor. Thou fool!
That gloriest in having power to ravish
A trifle from me I am weary of.
What is this life to me? not worth a thought;
Or, if it be esteem'd, 'tis that I lose it
To win a better: even thy malice serves
To me but as a ladder to mount up
To such a height of happiness, where I shall
Look down with scorn on thee, and on the world;
Where, circled with true pleasures, placed above
The reach of death or time, 'twill be my glory
To think at what an easy price I bought it.

There's a perpetual spring, perpetual youth:
No joint-benumbing cold, or scorching heat,
Famine, nor age, have any being there.
Forget, for shame, your Temple; bury in
Oblivion your feign'd Hesperian orchards:—
The golden fruit, kept by the watchful dragon,
Which did require a Hercules to get it,
Compared with what grows in all plenty there,
Deserves not to be named. The God I serve
Laughs at your happy Araby, or the
Elysian shades; for he hath made his bowers
Better in deed, than you can fancy yours.

Anton. O, take me thither with you!

Dor. Trace my steps,
And be assured you shall.

Sap. With my own hands
I'll rather stop that little breath is left thee,
And rob thy killing fever.

Theoph. By no means;
Let him go with her: do, seduced young man,
And wait upon thy saint in death; do, do:
And when you come to that imagined place—
That place of all delights—pray you, observe me,
And meet those cursed things I once call'd daughters,
Whom I have sent as harbingers before you;

If there be any truth in your religion,
In thankfulness to me, that with care hasten
Your journey thither, pray you send me some
Small pittance of that curious fruit you boast of.

Anton. Grant that I may go with her, and I will.

Sap. Wilt thou in thy last minute damn thyself?

Theoph. The gates to hell are open.

Dor. Know, thou tyrant,
Thou agent for the devil, thy great master,
Though thou art most unworthy to taste of it,
I can, and will.

Enter ANGELO, *in the Angel's habit.*

Harp. Oh! mountains fall upon me,
Or hide me in the bottom of the deep,
Where light may never find me!

Theoph. What 's the matter?

Sap. This is prodigious, and confirms her witchcraft.

Theoph. Harpax, my Harpax, speak!

Harp. I dare not stay:
Should I but hear her once more, I were lost.
Some whirlwind snatch me from this cursed place,
To which compared, (and with what now I suffer,)
Hell's torments are sweet slumbers! [*Exit.*

Sap. Follow him.

Theoph. He is distracted, and I must not lose him.
Thy charms upon my servant, cursed witch,
Give thee a short reprieve. Let her not die
Till my return. [*Exeunt* Sap. *and* Theoph.

Anton. She minds him not; what object
Is her eye fix'd on?

Mac. I see nothing.

Anton. Mark her.

Dor. Thou glorious minister of the Power I serve!
For thou art more than mortal,) is't for me,
Poor sinner, thou art pleased awhile to leave
Thy heavenly habitation, and vouchsafest,
Though glorified, to take my servant's habit?—
Or, put off thy divinity, so look'd
By lovely Angelo.

Ang. Know, I am the same;
And still the servant to your piety.
Your zealous prayers and pious deeds first won me
(But 'twas by His command to whom you sent them)
To guide your steps. I tried your charity,
When in a beggar's shape you took me up,
And clothed my naked limbs, and after fed,
As you believed, my famish'd mouth. Learn all,
By your example, to look on the poor
With gentle eyes! for in such habits, often,

Angels desire an alms.* I never left you,
Nor will I now; for I am sent to carry
Your pure and innocent soul to joys eternal,
Your martyrdom once suffer'd; and before it,
Ask any thing from me, and rest assured,
You shall obtain it.

Dor. I am largely paid
For all my torments. Since I find such grace,
Grant that the love of this young man to me,
In which he languisheth to death, may be
Changed to the love of heaven.

Ang. I will perform it;
And in that instant when the sword sets free
Your happy soul, his shall have liberty.
Is there aught else?

Dor. For proof that I forgive
My persecutor, who in scorn desired
To taste of that most sacred fruit I go to;
After my death, as sent from me, be pleased
To give him of it.

Ang. Willingly, dear mistress.

*——————— *Learn all,*

By your example. &c.—"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Heb. xiii. 2. Here is also a beautiful allusion to the parting speech of the "sociable archangel" to Tobit and his son.—GIFFORD.

Mac. I am amazed.
Anton. I feel a holy fire,
'hat yields a comfortable heat within me;
am quite alter'd from the thing I was.
ee! I can stand, and go alone; thus kneel
'o heavenly Dorothea, touch her hand
Vith a religious kiss. [*Kneels.*

Re-enter SAPRITIUS *and* THEOPHILUS.

Sap. He is well now,
ut will not be drawn back.
Theoph. It matters not,
Ve can discharge this work without his help.
ut see your son.
Sap. Villain!
Anton. Sir, I beseech you,
eing so near our ends, divide us not.
Theoph. I'll quickly make a separation of them:
.ast thou ought else to say?
Dor. Nothing, but to blame
hy tardiness in sending me to rest;
.y peace is made with heaven, to which my soul
egins to take her flight: strike, O! strike quickly;
nd, though you are unmoved to see my death,
.ereafter, when my story shall be read,

As they were present now, the hearers shall
Say this of Dorothea, with wet eyes,
" She lived a virgin, and a virgin dies."
[*Her head is struck off.*

Anton. O, take my soul along, to wait on thine!

Mac. Your son sinks too. [*Antoninus falls.*

Sap. Already dead!

Theoph. Die all
That are, or favour this accursed sect:
I triumph in their ends, and will raise up
A hill of their dead carcases, to o'erlook
The Pyrenean hills, but I'll root out
These superstitious fools, and leave the world
No name of Christian.

[*Loud music: Exit* ANGELO, *having first laid his hand upon the mouths of* ANTON. *and* DOR.

Sap. Ha! heavenly music!

Mac. 'Tis in the air.

Theoph. Illusions of the devil,
Wrought by some witch of her religion,
That fain would make her death a miracle;
It frights not me. Because he is your son,
Let him have burial; but let her body
Be cast forth with contempt in some highway,
And be to vultures and to dogs a prey. [*Exeunt.*

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ACT V. SCENE I.

THEOPHILUS *discovered sitting in his Study: books about him.*

Theoph. Is 't holiday, O Cæsar, that thy servant,
Thy provost, to see execution done
On these base Christians in Cæsarea,
Should now want work? Sleep these idolaters,
That none are stirring?—As a curious painter,

When he has made some honourable piece,
Stands off, and with a searching eye examines
Each colour, how 'tis sweeten'd; and then hugs
Himself for his rare workmanship—so here,
Will I my drolleries, and bloody landscapes,
Long past wrapt up, unfold, to make me merry
With shadows, now I want the substances.
My muster-book of hell-hounds. Were the Christians,
Whose names stand here, alive and arm'd, not Rome
Could move upon her hinges. What I've done,
Or shall hereafter, is not out of hate
To poor tormented wretches; no, I 'm carried
With violence of zeal, and streams of service
I owe our Roman gods. This Christian maid was well,

Enter ANGELO *with a basket filled with fruit and flowers.*

A pretty one; but let such horror follow
The next I feed with torments, that when Rome
Shall hear it, her foundation at the sound
May feel an earthquake. How now? [*Music.*

Ang. Are you amazed, sir?

So great a Roman spirit—and doth it tremble?

Theoph. How cam'st thou in? to whom thy business?

Ang. To you:
I had a mistress, late sent hence by you
Upon a bloody errand; you entreated,
That, when she came into that blessed garden
Whither she knew she went, and where, now happy,
She feeds upon all joy, she would send to you
Some of that garden fruit and flowers; which here,
To have her promise saved, are brought by me.

Theoph. Cannot I see this garden?

Ang. Yes, if the master
Will give you entrance. [*He vanishes.*

Theoph. 'Tis a tempting fruit,
And the most bright-cheek'd child I ever view'd;
Sweet smelling, goodly fruit. What flowers are these?
In Dioclesian's gardens, the most beauteous,
Compared with these, are weeds: is it not February,
The second day she died? frost, ice, and snow,
Hang on the beard of winter: where's the sun
That gilds this summer? pretty, sweet boy, say,
In what country shall a man find this garden?—
My delicate boy,—gone! vanish'd! within there!
Julianus! Geta!—

Enter JULIANUS *and* GETA.

Both. My lord.

Theoph. Are my gates shut?
Geta. And guarded.
Theoph. Saw you not
A boy?
Jul. Where?
Theoph. Here he enter'd; a young lad;
A thousand blessings danced upon his eyes:
A smoothfaced, glorious thing, that brought this basket.
Geta. No, sir!
Theoph. Away—but be in reach, if my voice calls you. [*Exeunt* JUL. *and* GETA.
No!—vanish'd, and not seen!—Be thou a spirit,
Sent from that witch to mock me, I am sure
This is essential, and, howe'er it grows,
Will taste it. [*Eats of the fruit.*
Harp. [*within.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha!
Theoph. So good! I'll have some more, sure.
Harp. Ha, ha, ha, ha! great liquorish fool!
Theoph. What art thou?
Harp. A fisherman.
Theoph. What dost thou catch?
Harp. Souls, souls; a fish call'd souls.
Theoph. Geta!

Re-enter GETA.

Geta. My lord.

Harp. [*within.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Theoph. What insolent slave is this, dares laugh at me?
Or what is't the dog grins at so?

Geta. I neither know, my lord, at what, nor whom; for there is none without, but my fellow Julianus, and he is making a garland for Jupiter.

Theoph. Jupiter! all within me is not well;
And yet not sick.

Harp. [*within.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Theoph. What's thy name, slave?

Harp. [*at one end of the room.*] Go look.

Geta. 'Tis Harpax' voice.

Theoph. Harpax! go, drag the caitiff to my foot,
That I may stamp upon him.

Harp. [*at the other end.*] Fool, thou liest!

Geta. He's yonder, now, my lord.

Theoph. Watch thou that end,
Whilst I make good this.

Harp. [*in the middle.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Theoph. Search for him. [*Exit* GETA.] All this ground, methinks, is bloody,
And paved with thousands of those Christians' eyes

Whom I have tortured; and they stare upon me.
What was this apparition? sure it had
A shape angelical. Mine eyes, though dazzled,
And daunted at first sight, tell me it wore
A pair of glorious wings; yes, they were wings;
And hence he flew:——'tis vanish'd! Jupiter,
For all my sacrifices done to him,
Never once gave me smile.—How can stone smile?
Or wooden image laugh? [*music.*] Ha! I remember,
Such music gave a welcome to mine ear,
When the fair youth came to me:—'tis in the air,
Or from some better place; a Power divine,
Through my dark ignorance, on my soul does shine,
And makes me see a conscience all stain'd o'er,
Nay, drown'd and damn'd for ever in Christian gore.

Harp. [*within.*] Ha, ha, ha!

Theoph. Again!—What dainty relish on my tongue
This fruit hath left! some angel hath me fed:
If so toothful, I will be banqueted. [*Eats again.*

Enter HARPAX, *in a fearful shape, fire flashing out of the Study.*

Harp. Hold!

Theoph. Not for Cæsar.

Harp. But for me thou shalt.

Theoph. Thou art no twin to him that last was here.
Ye Powers, whom my soul bids me reverence, guard me!
What art thou?

Harp. I am thy master.

Theoph. Mine!

Harp. And thou my everlasting slave: that Harpax,
Who hand in hand hath led thee to thy hell,
Am I.

Theoph. Avaunt!

Harp. I will not; cast thou down
That basket with the things in't, and fetch up
What thou hast swallow'd, and then take a drink,
Which I shall give thee, and I'm gone.

Theoph. My fruit!
Does this offend thee? see! [*Eats again.*

Harp. Spit it to the earth,
And tread upon it, or I'll piecemeal tear thee.

Theoph. Art thou with this affrighted? see, here's more. [*Pulls out a handful of flowers.*

Harp. Fling them away, I'll take thee else, and hang thee
In a contorted chain of icicles,
In the frigid zone: down with them!

Theoph. At the bottom
One thing I found not yet. See!
[*Holds up a cross of flowers.*

Harp. Oh! I am tortured.

Theoph. Can this do't? hence, thou fiend infernal, hence!

Harp. Clasp Jupiter's image, and away with that.

Theoph. At thee I'll fling that Jupiter; for, methinks,
I serve a better master: he now checks me
For murdering my two daughters, put on by thee.
By thy damn'd rhetoric did I hunt the life
Of Dorothea, the holy virgin-martyr.
She is not angry with the axe, nor me,
But sends these presents to me; and I'll travel
O'er worlds to find her, and from her white hand
Beg a forgiveness.

Harp. No; I'll bind thee here.

Theoph. I serve a strength above thine; this small weapon,*
Methinks, is armour hard enough.

Harp. Keep from me. [*Sinks a little.*

Theoph. Art posting to thy centre? down, hell-hound! down!

* ——— *this small weapon*—the "cross of flowers."

THE VIRGIN MARTYR.

Me thou hast lost. That arm which hurls thee hence,
[*Harpax disappears.*
Save me, and set me up, the strong defence
In the fair Christian quarrel!

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. Fix thy foot there,
Nor be thou shaken with a Cæsar's voice,
Though thousand deaths were in it; and I then
Will bring thee to a river, that shall wash
Thy bloody hands clean and more white than snow;
And to that garden where these blest things grow,
And to that martyr'd virgin, who hath sent
That heavenly token to thee: spread this brave wing,
And serve, than Cæsar, a far greater king. [*Exit.*

Theoph. It is, it is, some angel. Vanish'd again!
Oh, come back, ravishing boy! bright messenger!
Thou hast, by these mine eyes fix'd on thy beauty,
Illumined all my soul. Now look I back
On my black tyrannies, which, as they did
Outdare the bloodiest, thou, blest spirit, that lead'st me,
Teach me what I must do, and, to do well,
That my last act the best may parallel. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

DIOCLESIAN'S *Palace.*

Enter DIOCLESIAN, MAXIMINUS, *the Kings of Epire, Pontus, and Macedon, meeting* ARTEMIA; *Attendants.*

Artem. Glory and conquest still attend upon
Triumphant Cæsar!
Diocle. Let thy wish, fair daughter,
Be equally divided; and hereafter
Learn thou to know and reverence Maximinus,
Whose power, with mine united, makes one Cæsar.
Max. But that I fear 'twould be held flattery,
The bonds consider'd in which we stand tied,
As love and empire, I should say, till now
I ne'er had seen a lady I thought worthy
To be my mistress.
Artem. Sir, you show yourself
Both courtier and soldier; but take heed,
Take heed, my lord, though my dull-pointed beauty,
Stain'd by a harsh refusal in my servant,
Cannot dart forth such beams as may inflame you,
You may encounter such a powerful one,

That with a pleasing heat will thaw your heart,
Though bound in ribs of ice. Love still is love;
His bow and arrows are the same: Great Julius,
That to his successors left the name of Cæsar,
Whom war could never tame, that with dry eyes
Beheld the large plains of Pharsalia cover'd
With the dead carcases of senators
And citizens of Rome; when the world knew
No other lord but him, struck deep in years too,
(And men gray-hair'd forget the loves of youth,)
After all this, meeting fair Cleopatra,
A suppliant too, the magic of her eye,
Even in his pride of conquest, took him captive:
Nor are you more secure.

Max. Were you deform'd,
(But, by the gods, you are most excellent,)
Your gravity and discretion would o'ercome me;
And I should be more proud in being prisoner
To your fair virtues, than of all the honours,
Wealth, title, empire, that my sword hath purchased.

Diocle. This meets my wishes. Welcome it, Artemia,
With outstretch'd arms, and study to forget
That Antoninus ever was: thy fate
Reserved thee for this better choice; embrace it.

Max. This happy match brings new nerves to give strength
To our continued league.
Diocle. Hymen himself
Will bless this marriage, which we'll solemnize
In the presence of these kings.
K. of Pontus. Who rest most happy,
To be eye-witnesses of a match that brings
Peace to the empire.
Diocle. We much thank your loves:
But where 's Sapritius, our governor,
And our most zealous provost, good Theophilus?
If ever prince were blest in a true servant,
Or could the gods be debtors to a man,
Both they and we stand far engaged to cherish
His piety and service.
Artem. Sir, the governor
Brooks sadly his son's loss, although he turn'd
Apostate at his death; but bold Theophilus,
Who for the same cause, in my presence, seal'd
His holy anger on his daughters' hearts;
Having with tortures first tried to convert her,
Dragg'd the bewitching Christian to the scaffold,
And saw her lose her head.
Diocle. He is all worthy:

And from his own mouth I would gladly hear
The manner how she suffer'd.

Artem. 'Twill be deliver'd
With such contempt and scorn, (I know his nature,)
That rather 'twill beget your highness' laughter,
Than the least pity.

Diocle. To that end I would hear it.

Enter THEOPHILUS, SAPRITIUS, *and* MACRINUS.

Artem. He comes; with him the governor.

Diocle. O, Sapritius,
I am to chide you for your tenderness;
But yet, remembering that you are a father,
I will forget it. Good Theophilus,
I'll speak with you anon.—Nearer, your ear.
To SAPRITIUS.

Theoph. [*aside to* MACRINUS.] By Antoninus' soul,
I do conjure you,
And though not for religion, for his friendship,
Without demanding what 's the cause that moves me,
Receive my signet:—By the power of this,
Go to my prisons, and release all Christians,
That are in fetters there by my command.

Mac. But what shall follow?

Theoph. Haste then to the port;
You there shall find two tall ships ready rigg'd,
In which embark the poor distressed souls,
And bear them from the reach of tyranny.
Inquire not whither you are bound: the God
Whom they adore will give you prosperous winds,
And make your voyage such, and largely pay for
Your hazard, and your travail. Leave me here;
There is a scene that I must act alone:
Haste, good Macrinus; and the great God guide you!

Mac. I'll undertake 't; there's something prompts me to it;
'Tis to save innocent blood, a saint-like act:
And to be merciful has never been
By moral men themselves esteem'd a sin. [*Exit.*

Diocle. You know your charge?

Sap. And will with care observe it.

Diocle. For I profess he is not Cæsar's friend,
That sheds a tear for any torture that
A Christian suffers. Welcome, my best servant,
My careful, zealous provost! thou hast toil'd
To satisfy my will, though in extremes:
I love thee for 't; thou art firm rock, no changeling.
Prithee deliver, and for my sake do it,

Without excess of bitterness, or scoffs,
Before my brother and these kings, how took
The Christian her death?

Theoph. And such a presence,
Though every private head in this large room
Were circled round with an imperial crown,
Her story will deserve, it is so full
Of excellence and wonder.

Diocle. Ha! how is this?

Theoph. O! mark it, therefore, and with that attention,
As you would hear an embassy from heaven
By a wing'd legate; for the truth deliver'd,
Both how and what, this blessed virgin suffer'd,
And Dorothea but hereafter named,
You will rise up with reverence, and no more,
As things unworthy of your thoughts, remember
What the canonized Spartan ladies were,
Which lying Greece so boasts of. Your own matrons,
Your Roman dames, whose figures you yet keep
As holy relics, in her history
Will find a second urn: Gracchus' Cornelia,
Paulina, that in death desired to follow
Her husband Seneca, nor Brutus' Portia,
That swallow'd burning coals to overtake him,

Though all their several worths were given to one,
With this is to be mention'd.

Max. Is he mad?

Diocle. Why, they did die, Theophilus, and boldly;
This did no more.

Theoph. They, out of desperation,
Or for vain glory of an after-name,
Parted with life: this had not mutinous sons,
As the rash Gracchi were; nor was this saint
A doting mother, as Cornelia was.
This lost no husband, in whose overthrow
Her wealth and honour sunk; no fear of want
Did make her being tedious; but, aiming
At an immortal crown, and in His cause
Who only can bestow it; who sent down
Legions of ministering angels to bear up
Her spotless soul to heaven, who entertain'd it
With choice celestial music, equal to
The motion of the spheres; she, uncompell'd,
Changed this life for a better. My lord Sapritius,
You were present at her death; did you e'er hear
Such ravishing sounds?

Sap. Yet you said then 'twas witchcraft,
And devilish illusions.

Theoph. I then heard it

With sinful ears, and belch'd out blasphemous words
Against his Deity, which then I knew not,
Nor did believe in Him.

Diocle. Why, dost thou now?
Or dar'st thou, in our hearing——

Theoph. Were my voice
As loud as is His thunder, to be heard
Through all the world, all potentates on earth
Ready to burst with rage, should they but hear it;
Though hell, to aid their malice, lent her furies,
Yet I would speak, and speak again, and boldly:
I am a Christian; and the powers you worship,
But dreams of fools and madmen.

Max. Lay hands on him.

Diocle. Thou twice a child! for doting age so makes thee,
Thou couldst not else, thy pilgrimage of life
Being almost past through, in this last moment
Destroy whate'er thou hast done good or great—
Thy youth did promise much; and, grown a man,
Thou mad'st it good, and, with increase of years,
Thy actions still better'd: as the sun,
Thou didst rise gloriously, kept'st a constant course
In all thy journey; and now, in the evening,

When thou shouldst pass with honour to thy rest,
Wilt thou fall like a meteor?

Sap. Yet confess
That thou art mad, and that thy tongue and heart
Hath no agreement.

Max. Do; no way is left, else,
To save thy life, Theophilus.

Diocle. But, refuse it,
Destruction as horrid, and as sudden,
Shall fall upon thee, as if hell stood open,
And thou wert sinking thither.

Theoph. Hear me, yet;
Hear, for my service past.

Artem. What will he say?

Theoph. As ever I deserved your favour, hear me,
And grant one boon; 'tis not for life I sue for;
Nor is it fit that I, that ne'er knew pity
To any Christian, being one myself,
Should look for any; no, I rather beg
The utmost of your cruelty. I stand
Accountable for thousand Christians' deaths;
And, were it possible that I could die
A day for every one, then live again
To be again tormented, 'twere to me
An easy penance, and I should pass through

A gentle cleansing fire; but, that denied me,
It being beyond the strength of feeble nature,
My suit is, you would have no pity on me.
In mine own house there are a thousand engines
Of studied cruelty, which I did prepare
For miserable Christians; let me feel,
As the Sicilian did his brazen bull,*
The horrid'st you can find; and I will say,
In death, that you are merciful.

Diocle. Despair not;
In this thou shalt prevail. Go fetch them hither:
[*Exeunt some of the Guard.*
Death shall put on a thousand shapes at once,
And so appear before thee; racks, and whips!——
Thy flesh, with burning pincers torn, shall feed
The fire that heats them; and what's wanting to
The torture of thy body, I'll supply
In punishing thy mind. Fetch all the Christians
That are in hold; and here, before his face,
Cut them in pieces.

* *As the Sicilian did his brazen bull*—The brazen bull, an ingenious instrument of torture, invented by Perillus, and presented to Phalaris, the tyrant of Agrigentum, was fatal both to its author and its owner. Phalaris made the first experiment of its powers upon Perillus; and when the people, exasperated by his cruelties, eventually rose against him, the tyrant suffered death by its means himself.

Theoph. 'Tis not in thy power;
It was the first good deed I ever did.
They are removed out of thy reach; howe'er,
I was determined for my sins to die,
I first took order for their liberty;
And still I dare thy worst.

Re-enter Guard with racks and other instruments of torture.

Diocle. Bind him, I say;
Make every artery and sinew crack:
The slave that makes him give the loudest shriek,
Shall have ten thousand drachmas; wretch! I'll force thee
To curse the Power thou worship'st.

Theoph. Never, never:
No breath of mine shall e'er be spent on Him,
[*They torment him.*
But what shall speak His majesty or mercy.
I 'm honour'd in my sufferings. Weak tormentors,
More tortures, more;—alas! you are unskilful—
For Heaven's sake more; my breast is yet untorn;
Here purchase the reward that was propounded.
The irons cool,—here are arms yet, and thighs;
Spare no part of me.

Max. He endures beyond
The sufferance of a man.
Sap. No sigh nor groan,
To witness he hath feeling.
Diocle. Harder, villains!

Enter HARPAX.

Harp. Unless that he blaspheme, he's lost for ever.
If torments ever could bring forth despair,
Let these compel him to it:—Oh me!
My ancient enemies again! [*Falls down.*

Enter DOROTHEA *in a white robe, a crown upon her head, led in by* ANGELO; ANTONINUS, CALISTA, *and* CHRISTETA *following, all in white, but less glorious;* ANGELO *holds out a crown to* THEOPHILUS.

Theoph. Most glorious vision!—
Did e'er so hard a bed yield man a dream
So heavenly as this? I am confirm'd,
Confirm'd, you blessed spirits, and make haste
To take that crown of immortality
You offer to me. Death! till this blest minute,
I never thought thee slow-paced; nor would I
Hasten thee now, for any pain I suffer,
But that thou keep'st me from a glorious wreath,

Which through this stormy way I would creep to,
And, humbly kneeling, with humility wear it.
Oh! now I feel thee:—blessed spirits! I come;
And, witness for me all these wounds and scars,
I die a soldier in the Christian wars. [*Dies.*

Sap. I have seen thousands tortured, but ne'er yet
A constancy like this.

Harp. I am twice damn'd.

Ang. Haste to thy place appointed, cursed fiend!

[HARPAX *sinks with thunder and lightning.*

In spite of hell, this soldier's not thy prey;
'Tis I have won, thou that hast lost the day.

[*Exit with* DOR. *&c.*

Diocle. I think the centre of the earth be crack'd—
Yet I stand still unmoved, and will go on:
The persecution that is here begun,
Through all the world with violence shall run.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

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